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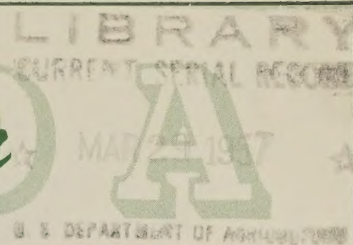
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# OPEDA Newsletter



## ORGANIZATION OF PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES OF THE U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Vol. 8 FEBRUARY 1956

No. 2 : OPEDA, Box 381, Washington 4, D. C.

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### OPEDA'S 1956 PROGRAM & OBJECTIVES

OPEDA's Council must review and approve all major plans which are carried out by the Executive Committee, Executive Officer and Committees. Results of such action taken by the Council on January 26:

#### Former Objectives Continued -

1. Support of Johnston Bill (S.2875) which embodies three of OPEDA's long-standing objectives: (1) increased annuity to 2% of best 5 year average, increased survivor benefits, more liberal terms for retirement at end of 30 years; (2) retirement credit for Federal-State experience; and (3) remedial legislation for disability retirees.
2. Support executive salary increases.
3. Work to abolish multiple state taxation of Federal employees.
4. Work for early revision of out-of-date Civil Service Classification standards. (See September 1955 Newsletter, page 3).
5. Support plans for providing Federal employees with health insurance.
6. Push the passage of the Forand Bill (H.R. 4967), providing for exchange of Federal employees with states without loss of retirement, leave, etc.
7. Help promote USDA Clubs.
8. Assist USDA Graduate School to meet training needs of the Department.
9. Support legislation authorizing agencies to detail employees to educational institutions for special training.
10. Develop basic principles of training to determine its value in getting work done through development and protection of more effective agency human resources.
11. Work towards improving methods of selecting supervisors and executives.

New Objectives Approved: (1) Work for air-conditioning of office space where needed; (2) Oppose H.R. 7760 providing competitive wage rates as basis for pay of professional employees; (3) Support legislation to protect employees from loss of salary when downgraded through no fault of their own; (4) Study proposals for a Senior Civil Service and recommend action to OPEDA Council; (5) Study the effect of the present performance rating system and propose changes which will meet needs of good management; (6) Support legislation to make it a Federal offense to molest or kill Food & Drug inspectors and Agriculture employees having similar function, in their line of duty.

### LATEST FROM THE HILL

Hearings on S.2875 (see above), originally scheduled for Feb. 1,2,3, were postponed after the first day. Civil Service Commissioner Young opposed S.2875 (which OPEDA is supporting) and strongly backed the bill based on the Kaplan plan, combining Federal Civil Service retirement with social security benefits. We believe, however, that odds are against the Kaplan plan at this Congress. OPEDA's Executive Director, Dillard Lasseter, and Ralph Sherman, Chairman of the Economic Committee, will appear at the hearing on February 8. Another newsletter shortly afterward will bring you up-to-date.

Passage of Forand Bill (no. 6 above) looks good.

(over)



### MEMBERSHIP DRIVE STILL UNDER WAY

Chairman Burkhead got his key men together for lunch recently and mapped out plans to reach that 2,000-new member mark. A leaflet to aid in this drive is being prepared by the Publicity Committee and will be available soon. Memberships are still coming in, with over 2400 having paid their '56 or '56 and '57 dues.

### NOTES FROM OPEDA LUNCHEONS

General James P. S. Devereux drew a record number of OPEDIANS at the Washington luncheon on January 17. Now Congressman from Maryland Second District, he discussed two studies made during his trip abroad as a member of the Armed Forces Committee. One was status of the Forces treaty under which military personnel of this country who break laws of the country in which they are stationed are tried under the laws of that country. He found trials were fair, jails clean and well managed, and no complaints. Regarding the question of family housing for military personnel abroad, he found that in Germany it is quite adequate; in France there is a definite problem, and in Spain better progress is being made than elsewhere. In Yugoslavia, Marshall Tito "rolled out the red carpet" for him. General Devereux thinks he convinced Tito that the U.S. has a right to know what happens to military equipment sent to his country.

Beltsville Luncheon - Dr. Thomas Fontaine, former scientist at Beltsville and recently with the Research Utilization Laboratory in Philadelphia, discussed his present job as assistant to Senator John C. Stennis of Mississippi. He said he was chosen because of his research training which equipped him to ferret out information and analyze it, in order to advise the Senator so he can make the "proper decisions." His listeners found of particular interest remarks of Senator Stennis which Dr. Fontaine quoted: "We must have a long-range agricultural research program looking into the future 40 or 50 years. This will enable us to get and hold top scientists, who will be willing to join in these far-reaching programs." "We justly spend large sums of money each year for research aimed at alleviating human sickness and increasing our life span, but should we not also devote more time and money to research aimed at curing our farm ills and increasing the life span of our soils."

### POSSIBILITIES OF AFFILIATION

A special committee, authorized by the OPEDA Council to explore possibilities of affiliation with other professional organizations, reports that meetings were held with two similar groups and that further consideration will be given to the possibility. President Chris Henderson, Executive Director Lasseter, and W. S. Harris, a member of the committee, met with a group from the Patent Office Society and a group of engineers from the Navy Department. However, by no means would such affiliation mean that OPEDA would lose its identity or autonomy--simply that there would be other "shoulders to the wheel" in pushing for greater recognition of professional Federal employees.

### NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR NEW OFFICERS

The following have been appointed a Nominating Committee to bring in a panel of candidates from which the Council may elect officers and Executive Committee members for OPEDA, to take office on May 1, 1956: Ralph Stauber (AMS), chairman; Oneta Liter (REA); S. B. Fracker (ARS); Chas. B. Ingram (CSS); Austin L. Patrick (SCS); S. B. Herrell (Office of Personnel); Wm. S. Swingler (FS); John T. Presley (ARS--Beltsville).

RECEIVED IN OPEDA OFFICE - "Just a note to tell you that your new Newsletter is much much better than old one. I like this way better." Thanks. We'll try to keep it moving.